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MEDIA CONTACT:
Nicole Garcia
Nicole.Garcia@cityofchicago.org

COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY NOMINATES THREE FINALISTS FOR CHICAGO POLICE SUPERINTENDENT

CHICAGO, IL- Today, the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability (CCPSA) voted to nominate three candidates to serve as the next Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department (CPD), listed in alphabetical order by last name: Chief Angel Novalez, Chief Chris Papaioannou, and First Deputy Superintendent Antionette Ursitti.

The nominations follow a four-month nationwide search that began on July 16, 2026, following the retirement of Larry Snelling, who was nominated by the Commission in 2023 and subsequently appointed by Mayor Brandon Johnson and confirmed by City Council. This marks the second time the Commission has conducted a search for Chicago's Police Superintendent since taking on this responsibility under city ordinance in 2021.

"We knew going into this search that we would have some difficult decisions to make, and we did." said Commission President Remel Terry. "We had 46 people apply for this position, and narrowing that pool down to three required a lot of thoughtful discussion and deliberations. Angel Novalez, Chris Papaionnou, and Antionette Ursitti stood out through that process, and we're proud to put their names forward for the mayor's consideration."

Under the CCPSA ordinance, the Commission is responsible for conducting a nationwide search and submitting three candidates to the mayor within 120 days of a vacancy in the Superintendent's office.

Throughout the search, the Commission worked to ensure that Chicagoans had opportunities to share their priorities for the next Superintendent. Key highlights from the process include:

- **Nationwide Search:** The Commission partnered with Ralph Andersen & Associates, a national search firm, to recruit candidates from across the country. Applications opened on August 27 and closed on September 24, drawing 46 applicants from a diverse pool of current and former CPD members and law enforcement professionals from across the country.
- **Extensive Community Engagement:** The Commission held 8 public listening sessions in neighborhoods across Chicago and online, including one specifically for youth and another conducted entirely in Spanish. CCPSA staff also held targeted focus groups with

more than 50 organizations, including youth organizations, community violence intervention and violence prevention groups, immigrant and refugee rights organizations, justice-impacted individuals, economic development organizations, and survivors of crime. Outreach also included community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, labor groups, and social service providers. The Commission also invited all police unions, high-ranking sworn and civilian staff, and police affinity groups to participate in discussions about the search and received valuable input from all those who participated.

- **District Council Engagement:** District Councils played an important role in expanding opportunities for public input. 18 of the city's 22 District Councils hosted their own listening sessions, asking residents the same questions posed at the Commission's public meetings.
- **Surveys and Expert Input:** The Commission received more than 400 online responses from community members, including 110 from CPD personnel. Commission staff also interviewed 22 subject matter experts from Chicago and across the country, including law enforcement leaders, academics, and police accountability professionals.
- **Thorough Candidate Evaluation**: The Commission reviewed applications and conducted two rounds of interviews to assess candidates' qualifications, leadership expertise, ability to address the challenges facing the Chicago Police Department. Community feedback and input from public safety experts helped inform the Commission's evaluation of candidates

"These three candidates offer unique backgrounds with varied, impactful experiences throughout the Chicago Police Department," said Commissioner Sandra Wortham. "All three have spent years in leadership roles within the Department, with experiences ranging from patrol operations and the apprehension of violent offenders to criminal investigations, community policing, large-scale Department operations, and reform efforts. They each bring unique and impressive qualifications that have prepared them to lead the Chicago Police Department."

The Commission's three nominees are:

Chief Angel Novalez

Chief Novalez is a 26-year member of the Chicago Police Department and currently serves as Chief of Community Policing, where he commands the Department's Community Policing, Civil Rights, and Special Activities units. In this role, he leads initiatives to strengthen relationships between police and residents, expand community partnerships, and advance compliance with community policing-related consent decree requirements. He previously served as Chief of Constitutional Policing and Reform from 2022-2024, where he oversaw the Department's policy, training, and reform strategies to advance compliance with the federal consent decree. As Deputy Chief of Community Policing from 2021-2022, he helped expand the Neighborhood Policing Initiative (NPI), youth engagement programs, and the Civil Rights Unit, including the creation of new liaison positions serving historically underserved communities. His career also includes

serving as Commander of the Office of Community Policing, Lieutenant in Area 4, Sergeant in the 5th District, and police officer in several Chicago neighborhoods. He also led the Departments' Procedural Justice Training Program and testified before the U.S Senate Judiciary Committee about the impact of gun violence on Chicago communities and law enforcement officers. Among his many recognitions are the Police Blue Star, Superintendent's Award of Valor, Illinois Chiefs of Police Medal of Valor, and a Life Saving Award. He holds a bachelor's degree in public safety management from Calumet College of St. Joseph.

Chief Chris Papaioannou

Chief Papaioannou is a 27-year member of the Chicago Police Department and currently serves as Chief of the Bureau of Counterterrorism, where he leads the Gang and Narcotics Division, the Public Transportation Division, Airport Operations, intelligence coordination, threat assessments, and partnerships with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. He previously served as Deputy Chief of the Bureau of Counterterrorism, Deputy Chief of the Training and Support Group, and Street Deputy, where he provided command staff oversight during critical incidents and emergency responses. As Commander of the 19th Police District from 2019-2021, he oversaw district operations. Earlier in his career, he managed recruit training and operations as Commanding Officer of the Chicago Police Academy. His experience also includes serving in the Department's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit, supervising initiatives targeting gun and gang violence, and holding leadership positions in several police districts. Chief Papaioannou has also coordinated public safety operations for major Chicago events and served as the Deputy Incident Commander during the 2024 Democratic National Convention. In 2021, he received the Law Enforcement Official of the Year Award from the Illinois Security Professionals Association. Papaioannou holds a master's degree in public safety administration from Calumet College of St. Joseph and a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois Chicago. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business Advanced Strategy Program.

First Deputy Superintendent Antionette Ursitti

First Deputy Superintendent Ursitti is a 26-year member of the Chicago Police Department and currently serves as the Department's second highest ranking official, overseeing day-to-day operations, administration, and coordinating strategic priorities across CPD's bureaus. She previously served as Chief of Bureau of Detectives from 2023-2026, where she oversaw more than 1,200 personnel responsible for investigating violent and property crimes throughout Chicago. In that role, she led efforts to strengthen criminal investigations, expand victim support services, and develop investigative resources, including the Chicago Crime Gun Intelligence Center, Family Liaison Office, and specialized homicide and non-fatal shooting teams. She oversaw the expansion of youth diversion programs across all 22 police districts. Earlier in her career, Ursitti served as Deputy Chief of the Training and Support Group and as both Commander and Lieutenant in the Crisis Intervention Unit, where she helped advance officer training and

coordinated responses to mental health emergencies. Her recognition includes the Chicago Police Department's William Powers Leadership Award (2025) and Richard J. Daley Police Medal of Honor (2024), the Illinois Security Professionals Association's Law Enforcement Official of the Year Award (2024), and NAMI Chicago's CIT Officer of the Year Award (2018), among others. Ursetti holds a Doctorate in Education in Ethical Leadership from Olivet Nazarene University, a master's degree in human services and counseling from National Louis University, and a bachelor's degree in communications from Loyola University Chicago. She is also a licensed professional counselor in Illinois.

Mayor Brandon Johnson now has 30 days to select one of the three nominees or reject the slate with a written explanation. If the Mayor rejects the slate, the Commission has 30 days to submit three new nominees. The mayor's selection is subject to review and conformation by Chicago City Council.

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